

Findings of Fact

Site Description	Mayo Island is a 16-acre site in the middle of the James River, historically used for industrial and parking purposes. It has limited utility infrastructure, no connection to the municipal sewer, and lies below the 100-year flood elevation.
Scope of Review	The project is subject to Location, Character, and Extent review under Section 17.07 and design recommendations under Section 17.05 of the Richmond City Charter.
Prior Approvals	N/A
Project Description	<p>The project proposes phased demolition, ecological restoration, and repurposing of Mayo Island as a 16-acre flood-resilient public park, including trails, picnic areas, native plantings, and interpretive signage.</p> <p>Project Phases:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Demolition: Removal of buildings, asphalt, and electrical infrastructure. - Site Grading & Conservation Planting: Grading of the island, removal of artificial fill, and seeding of native meadows and phytoremediating plant species. - Public Park Development: Construction of nature trails, gathering spaces, signage, and access points. <p>Conservation Easement: 14.5 acres will be protected in perpetuity under easement held by Capital Region Land Conservancy and DCR, including caps on impervious surface and restrictions on new development.</p> <p>Staff Review:</p> <p>Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends approval with the following conditions:</p>

Urban Design Guidelines and Master Plan

	Text	Staff Analysis
Master Plan		
<p>Big Moves:</p> <p>iv. Provide Greenways & Parks for All (R300, p.197)</p> <p>v. Reconnect the City (R300, p.199)</p> <p>vi. Realign City Facilities (R300, p.201)</p>	<p>Provide Greenways & Parks for All: Develop parks and greenways so that by 2037 100% of Richmonders live within a 10-minute walk of a park.</p> <p>Reconnect the City: Cap highways to reknit neighborhoods destroyed by interstates, build/improve bridges, introduce street grids, and make the city easier to access by foot, bike, and transit.</p>	<p>The project will transform an underutilized and inaccessible site into a regional park destination, significantly expanding access to public green space.</p> <p>With proximity to Downtown, Manchester, and major trail systems, Mayo Island serves as a physical and symbolic connector between historically divided neighborhoods.</p> <p>The use of city-owned land as public green space supports the City's goals for climate</p>

	Realign City Facilities: <i>Improve City buildings (schools, libraries, fire stations, police stations, etc.) to provide better services in efficient, shared-use, accessible facilities to better match and serve the growing city.</i>	resilience, equity, and community-centered investment.
Urban Design Guidelines		
Transportation – Paving Surface Materials (pg. 4):	<i>The selection of appropriate paving materials should be based upon visual compatibility, sustainability, performance, and maintenance.</i>	The proposed trail system will primarily use permeable and natural materials. <u>Staff recommends that final plans prioritize durability, maintenance, and stormwater performance in material selection.</u>
Transportation – Multimodal Transportation (pg. 6):	<i>The UDC prioritizes transportation design for pedestrians and vulnerable users</i>	The proposed design prioritizes walking, biking, and paddler access, integrating with the Capital Trail and Richmond Slave Trail. <u>Staff recommends final plans explicitly detail trail connections, emphasize inclusive access for multi-modal park users, and prioritize traffic calming at bridge approaches.</u>
Environment – Public Parks / Universal Design (pg. 9):	Public park design should ensure equal access to all users.	<u>Staff recommends maintaining universal access as a central design element throughout the proposed project's future phases.</u>
Environment – Landscaping (pg. 10):	<i>Plantings should be compatible with and relate to surrounding landscapes. Designs that include conservation landscaping, strategically minimize the urban heat island effect, or decrease stormwater runoff are strongly encouraged.</i>	The plan includes a layered meadow system with seasonal diversity and long-term restoration benefits. <u>Staff recommends submission of a planting and maintenance plan at Final Review to ensure ecological goals are met.</u>
Environment – Stormwater / LID (pg. 11):	<i>Developments should promote impact minimization techniques through alternative stormwater management practices.</i>	The design removes impervious surface, reduces runoff, and integrates stormwater gardens and no-rise grading. Staff supports continued FEMA coordination and integration of green infrastructure.
Public Facilities – General Site Design (pg. 13):	<i>The site should respond to its users through its design and by providing an appropriate array of amenities to serve those users. Circulation within the site should be geared toward pedestrian movements, not vehicular. Connectivity from the site to adjacent areas should be considered during the design phase and include accommodations for non-motorized means of transit and other micro-modal transportation, such as bicycle parking, bike racks, showers, restrooms, and air pumps.</i>	The project envisions interpretive signage, gathering spaces, paddler launch points, and portable restrooms. <u>Staff recommends submitting final specifications for built structures, site features, and furnishings to confirm compatibility with James River Park System standards for environmental performance, durability, and visual consistency.</u> <u>Staff recommends that final outdoor lighting details minimize light pollution and follow dark-sky compliance guidelines</u>

Commented [RR1]: Match these to above conditions

	<i>Adequate seating, lighting and trash receptacles should also be provided in the design of plazas. The incorporation of Low Impact Design (LID) or sustainable design is highly encouraged.</i>	
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